

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated November 15, 2004, in which claims 14-19 and 23-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Herbert in view of Merrill et al. and Muheim. With this Amendment, claims 14, 23, 29, and 34 have been amended. In reliance on the following remarks, the present application with pending claims 14-19 and 23-38 is in condition for allowance, and reconsideration and notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner noted that to avoid double patenting, there should be a clear line of distinction between the claims of this Application and those of Application Serial Nos. 10/684,932 and 10/665,871, which contain claims covering connectors/bags having similar features to those of the kits and apparatuses claimed in the present application. In reviewing the claims of Application Serial Nos. 10/684,932 and 10/665,871 and the claims of the present application, Applicant believes that a clear line of distinction between the claims is present.

In the Office Action, claims 14-19 and 23-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Herbert (U.S. 4,561,110) in view of Merrill et al. (U.S. 2001/0027345A1) and Muheim (U.S. 3,575,225). The Office Action asserts that Herbert teaches bag/connector combinations for storing medical liquids. The bag is made of polyethylene that can be heat sterilized and that may be a laminate. While Herbert does not disclose the particular polymers claimed, the Office Action asserts that Merrill teaches the use of ultra high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMWPE) films to make medical devices that are heat sterilizable and transparent. Additionally, the Office Action asserts that Muheim teaches the use of UHMWPE in autoclavable bags for medical uses.

Claims 14, 23, 29, and 34 have been amended to delete "ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene (UHMW PE)" from the list of polymers. Upon further review, ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene has a melting point of between 120 and 150° Celsius and thus is not capable of withstanding temperatures of at least 253° Celsius. In contrast, the remaining polymers have melting temperatures in excess of 253° Celsius. The rejection to claim 14 should be withdrawn and amended claim 14 allowed.

In that amended claim 14 is in condition for allowance, the rejections to claims 15-19 and 29-33, which depend therefrom, should be withdrawn as well and claims 15-19 and 29-33 allowed.

The rejection to claim 23 should be withdrawn and amended claim 23 allowed. In that amended claim 23 is in condition for allowance, the rejections to claims 24-28 and 34-38, which depend therefrom, should be withdrawn as well and claims 24-28 and 34-38 allowed.

Line 16 of page 6 has been amended to correct a typographical error in the original submission.

Line 19 of page 6 has been amended to correct a typographical error in the original submission.

Line 15 of page 12 has been amended to correct a typographical error in the original submission. The Examiner may reference that the numerical reference 202 is assigned to the first press, not the numerical reference 206.

Lines 23 and 24 of page 14 have been amended to correct typographical errors made in the original submission and to clarify a phrase in the sentence.

Line 30 of page 14 and line 1 of page 15 have been amended to correct typographical errors made in the original submission and to clarify a phrase in the sentence.

Line 1 of page 15 has been amended to add a word inadvertently omitted in the original submission.

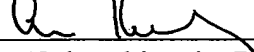
Lines 5 and 6 of page 15 have been amended to clarify a phrase in the sentence.

In view of the foregoing, pending claims 14-19 and 23-38 are in condition for allowance.

A notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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